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SECOND REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL PURSUANT TO SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1270 (1999) ON THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 26 of its resolution 1270 (1999) of 22 October 1999, the Security Council requested me to report every 45 days to provide updates on the status of the peace process, on security conditions on the ground and on the continued level of deployment of personnel of the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG). The present report is the second submitted pursuant to that request and covers developments since the previous report, dated 6 December 1999 (S/1999/1223).

2. In my letter to the President of the Security Council dated 23 December 1999 (S/1999/1285), I informed the Council that Nigeria had decided to repatriate Nigerian troops participating in ECOMOG in Sierra Leone. In that letter I also recommended that the Council authorize, as soon as possible, the expansion of the military component of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and that the mandate of the Mission be broadened to enable it to assume functions now performed by ECOMOG. At informal consultations held on 29 December, members of the Council discussed the recommended changes to the mandate and strength of UNAMSIL in view of the withdrawal of ECOMOG and requested the Secretariat to provide it with further detailed information as soon as possible. Pursuant to that request, the present report contains an elaboration of the proposed mandate and concept of operations for an expanded UNAMSIL as well as its force strength and composition.

II. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Political developments

3. During the last week of December and the first week of January, the situation in Sierra Leone went through a difficult period as ECOMOG continued its withdrawal from several key locations in the provinces and the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP) challenged the implementation of some of the aspects of the peace process. The resulting serious tensions subsided somewhat with the deployment of UNAMSIL troops to the countryside, including Makeni and Magburaka,

which are under RUFP control. The accelerated deployment of UNAMSIL troops has also helped to restore public calm, and it is hoped that this has opened the way for the delivery of humanitarian assistance, free movement of the civilian population and the restoration of civil authority.

4. On 29 December 1999, at a press conference in Freetown, Foday Sankoh, the leader of RUFP presented a position paper on alleged violations of the Lomé Peace Agreement. In it RUFP criticized the Government and the international community for not providing the financial resources necessary to allow RUFP participation in various ceasefire monitoring mechanisms or the transformation of the Revolutionary United Front into a political party. In the paper, RUFP also expressed concerns about the mandate and strength of UNAMSIL and stated that the Party would not allow the deployment of UNAMSIL in areas under its control until the district-level ceasefire monitoring committees were in place. In a letter dated 4 January 2000 addressed to me, Mr. Sankoh reiterated some of his concerns, but also emphasized his commitment to the full implementation of the Lomé Agreement and indicated that RUFP had no objections to the establishment and deployment of UNAMSIL.

5. The Government, for its part, published a comprehensive reply to the RUFP paper, which defended the mandate of UNAMSIL and confirmed President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's support for the speedy deployment of UNAMSIL throughout the country. On 31 December, after intensive discussions, the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, chaired by President Kabbah, decided that the deployment of UNAMSIL should proceed immediately and that the Government would find a way to establish ceasefire monitoring committees in various parts of the country and to allow the participation of RUFP representatives in them. Subsequently, despite initial obstruction by some Revolutionary United Front elements on the ground, the deployment was completed successfully at Makeni, Magburaka, Daru, Port Loko complex, Lungi and parts of Freetown.

6. Following a decision by the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, Mr. Sankoh, Deputy Defence Minister Hinga Norman and the ECOMOG Force Commander visited the areas of Bo and Kenema as part of an effort to build confidence and awareness and to encourage the disarmament of ex-combatants in those areas. However, few have come forward to disarm.

7. My Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, assumed his functions in Freetown on 11 December.

Security situation

8. During the reporting period, the security situation remained precarious. On 6 December a Revolutionary United Front commander, Sam Bockarie, detained two staff members of Médecins sans frontières in Buedu. This incident was resolved peacefully with the assistance of UNAMSIL and regional leaders; the hostages were released unharmed on 16 December. The situation in the Eastern Province, in particular the Kailahun area, calmed down after Mr. Bockarie left the country on 18 December. Since his departure, it would appear that all or most

Revolutionary United Front commanders in the Northern and Eastern Provinces have now reaffirmed their commitment to RUFP leader Sankoh.

9. Serious concerns remain about the rising level of lawlessness and banditry, especially in and around Freetown and in the areas of Lungi and Port Loko. Many ceasefire violations and incidents of civilian harassment appear to have been committed by former Sierra Leonean army elements based in the Occra Hills region. In addition, there were reported attempts to smuggle weapons to Freetown, which prompted the Government and ECOMOG to take supplementary security measures. At the same time, security deteriorated in several disarmament centres (see paras. 11 and 12 below). However, citing some improvement in security conditions in the capital, the Government deemed it possible to shorten for two hours the existing curfew in Freetown.

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants

10. Progress in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme has generally been very slow, presumably as the various groups have been assessing the evolving situation, as well as the deployment of UNAMSIL and repatriation of ECOMOG troops. Efforts are now under way by the Government and its external partners to increase the capacity of the various disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites, especially in the Makeni/Magburaka area. At the same time, the drawdown of ECOMOG in Daru led to the dismantling of one reception area for disarmament. As at 10 January, there were more than 6,000 ex-combatants present in disarmament centres. In a message dated 6 January, President Kabbah indicated that the often-claimed figure of 45,000 combatants might be "an overestimation".

11. The very slow pace of demobilization is compounded by continuing unrest among ex-combatants in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camps at Lungi and Port Loko. The payment of the first tranche of $150 of their allowances bought temporary calm at the end of December. However, the discharge of ex-combatants from the camps has been delayed as a result of logistical problems, including the preparation of identification cards, which the Government, together with its external partners, will have to address urgently. There is also concern that a large number of discharged ex-combatants may move into Freetown owing to the continued lack of access to other parts of the country, thus further increasing the level of insecurity. In addition, the various armed groups have yet to come forward with the required information about their military strength.

12. On 3 January about 100 former combatants in Port Loko tried to attack the UNAMSIL office at the local disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camp, but were stopped by ECOMOG security guards who fired warning shots. Four ex-combatants and two civilians were wounded during the unrest, and a few United Nations vehicles were slightly damaged. On 9 January several ex-combatants attacked a Nigerian UNAMSIL officer in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camp in Lungi.

13. On 4 January the Government decided to relocate all Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) combatants to the vacated ECOMOG barracks at Mile 91. This proposal was developed in cooperation with the AFRC leader,

Johnny Paul Koroma, to improve control over AFRC elements in Freetown and the Occra Hills through their transfer to a central location where they would be screened for service in a restructured Sierra Leonean army and, if ineligible, would be registered for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The Mile 91 camp will also serve as the training facility for those accepted back into military service. Preparations for the implementation of the proposal are currently under way.

14. On 22 December the World Bank announced a contribution of $25 million for a community reintegration and rehabilitation project in Sierra Leone. The aim of this project is to help reintegrate ex-combatants and to rebuild the social and economic infrastructure. The Bank also decided to establish its presence in Sierra Leone.

Presence of the Miliary Observer Group

15. During the reporting period ECOMOG continued to withdraw its troops from various locations in the country, including Lungi, Port Loko, Lunsar, Masiaka, Mile 91, Mano, and Daru. ECOMOG, which at present has a strength of about 4,729 troops, retains positions in Freetown, Rogberi Junction, Zimmi, Mano Junction and several other locations.

16. On 23 December the Secretariat held discussions at United Nations Headquarters with a high-level Nigerian delegation on the incorporation of Nigerian units in UNAMSIL as well as on the modalities of withdrawing Nigerian troops from ECOMOG. The discussions resulted in an understanding that Nigeria and the United Nations would work together closely to avoid any security gap in Sierra Leone and that Nigeria and the Secretariat would coordinate the deployment of troops to and the repatriation of troops from Sierra Leone and would also discuss, in due course, the participation of Nigeria in an expanded UNAMSIL.

Deployment of the Mission

17. On 7 December the Force Commander, Major General Vijay Kumar Jetley, assumed command of the military component of UNAMSIL. The present military strength is 4,819 (see annex), with five of the six authorized battalions now deployed in Sierra Leone. At present UNAMSIL is deployed in the Freetown peninsula, at Lungi airport and its vicinity and in Port Loko, Lunsar, Masiaka, Makeni, Magburaka, Kenema and Daru.

Human rights

18. The human rights situation in Sierra Leone improved somewhat during the last week of December, although sporadic attacks on civilians in the Port Loko area continued. Ambushes against villages and civilian traffic in this area involved looting, rape, abduction and in some instances summary execution. However, following the establishment of UNAMSIL patrols along the Lungi-Port Loko road, the number of reported incidents in those areas decreased.

19. There were no noteworthy releases of abductees during the reporting period, in spite of efforts by the Committee for the Release of Prisoners of War and

Non-Combatants chaired by UNAMSIL. On 22 December the Committee issued a press release drawing attention to the lack of progress in this area and appealing to the leadership of RUFP and AFRC to ensure the release of all abducted persons without further delay.

20. On 29 December, UNAMSIL, acting on behalf of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, submitted to the Government the draft statute for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, developed by independent experts with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Government is currently reviewing the text with a view to the speedy establishment of the Commission. The United Nations is also providing technical assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone with regard to the creation of an independent Human Rights Commission, as called for by the Lomé Agreement. A draft statute is being prepared and will be submitted to the Government in late January.

Humanitarian aspects

21. As the result of a good harvest, the humanitarian situation has somewhat improved in some parts of country, but remains poor in the Northern Province, where about 2.6 million civilians have been without sufficient access to relief for months or, in some cases, years. Humanitarian agencies in Revolutionary United Front/AFRC areas were again forced to scale back their operations after Revolutionary United Front combatants detained two aid workers in Kailahun in early December. Although they were released unharmed, the abductions led to the suspension of medical services in the area and again delayed deployment to other parts of the country.

22. In accessible areas, however, humanitarian programmes have continued to make good progress. New food distribution efforts were undertaken in the towns of Port Loko and Kabala to respond to evolving humanitarian emergencies. Further, the Government and former rebel groups on 30 December reopened roads in the Eastern Province that had been closed for years, linking the major towns of Kenema, Koidu, Kono and Kailahun.

III. MANDATE AND CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS OF AN EXPANDED MISSION

23. As indicated in my previous reports to the Security Council, the establishment and maintenance of security in the country is an essential condition for the success of the peace process in Sierra Leone. Security is indispensable for the successful execution of the programme of disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants, which could remove a threat to the stability of the country and, at the same time, facilitate the restoration of a measure of normalcy to social and economic life in Sierra Leone. Security is also necessary to implement the political and human rights-related provisions of the Lomé Agreement and to ensure humanitarian assistance throughout the country.

24. The presently authorized strength of UNAMSIL of up to 6,000 military personnel was considered sufficient for assisting the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and creating an acceptable level of security in the country in conjunction with a strong ECOMOG presence. For the

time being, the Sierra Leonean army, which has yet to be restructured, retrained and equipped, is unable to contribute in a substantial manner to national security. Now that ECOMOG has decided to repatriate its troops, there appears to be no alternative to expanding UNAMSIL in order to keep the peace process in Sierra Leone on track.

25. Nevertheless, it is clear that the United Nations will not be able to maintain a major military presence in Sierra Leone for a prolonged period of time. The Government of Sierra Leone and its bilateral partners should therefore develop, as a priority, a credible and reliable mechanism to ensure national security and thereby decrease its dependence on outside assistance. For the time being, however, the restructuring and training of the Sierra Leonean armed forces, as provided for in the Lomé Agreement, as well as the training of the police, will require important support from the international community. I appeal to the donor community to make the necessary contributions to those ends.

Mandate

26. In my letter of 23 December (S/1999/1285) it was proposed that the UNAMSIL mandate be broadened to enable it to assume functions now being performed by ECOMOG, in particular the provision of security at Lungi airport and at key installations, buildings and government institutions in and around Freetown. It should be underscored, however, that these tasks would not fundamentally change the nature of the mandate, which is based on the requirement in article XVI of the Lomé Agreement for a neutral peacekeeping force (see S/1999/777, annex). The main focus of UNAMSIL activities in Sierra Leone, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1270 (1999), would obviously continue to be cooperation with the Government and other parties in the implementation of the Lomé Agreement and the provision of assistance to the Government in carrying out the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan for ex-combatants.

27. In addition to the crucial functions described above, UNAMSIL would also have to be able to assume other tasks that are currently assigned to ECOMOG. Such tasks would include guarding the weapons and ammunition retrieved during the disarmament process and assisting in their destruction, as well as helping the Government, within the limits of its mandate, to recover illegal arms, a task that would remain essentially a national responsibility. The expanded force would also contribute to the free circulation of people and goods and the delivery of humanitarian assistance along selected key roads and perform other functions as described below. It is understood that, in accordance with its present mandate as contained in resolution 1270 (1999), UNAMSIL would continue, within its capabilities and areas of deployment, to afford protection to civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, taking into account the responsibilities of the Government.

Concept of operations

28. UNAMSIL would essentially be expected to continue to function with the cooperation of the parties. However, to achieve the objectives of the Lomé Agreement, it would be important that UNAMSIL, through its military presence, military capabilities and posture, be able to deter attempts to derail the peace

process. In addition to its current mandate under resolution 1270 (1999), the proposed concept of UNAMSIL operations would include the following elements:

(a) Establishing a substantial presence at key locations and government buildings, in particular in Freetown, important intersections and major airports, including Lungi airport;

(b) Providing additional security at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites and guarding and destroying weapons and ammunition collected from ex-combatants;

(c) Conducting extensive mobile patrols, in particular throughout Freetown and in the vicinity of UNAMSIL fixed positions throughout the country;

(d) Conducting frequent patrols and, if necessary, providing armed escorts on important roads to ensure the free flow of people, goods and humanitarian assistance along main thoroughfares;

(e) Affirming, when necessary, through the deployment of the UNAMSIL rapid reaction element, the commitment of the United Nations to the peace process;

(f) Maintaining adequate reserves to ensure flexibility and sufficient reaction capabilities and reinforcing its positions or patrols when necessary;

(g) Maintaining close coordination with the Sierra Leonean law enforcement authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities.

29. Following a thorough assessment by UNAMSIL of the security situation throughout the country, a sizeable and militarily credible United Nations force would be required to accomplish these objectives, most of which were initially part of the mandate of ECOMOG. The expanded United Nations force would therefore require up to 11,100 military personnel, including 260 military observers, 12 infantry battalions, force and sector headquarters personnel, 2 military engineer companies, adequate medical personnel and facilities, communications and transport units, a helicopter and aviation element and other military support elements. It is envisaged that most battalions would be largely self-sustaining, with any additional logistical support being provided by civilian contractors. This arrangement has become necessary, given that extensive efforts to identify a Member State willing to contribute a military logistic support unit have been unsuccessful.

30. The increase in the number of infantry battalions from 6 to 12 would make it necessary to establish sectoral command and control structures, which would require approximately 200 military personnel each. The required engineering companies would engage in demining and repair of essential roads, bridges and camp facilities. The infantry battalions would also be supplied with the necessary night vision and communication equipment.

31. The force would be deployed in four sectors, each of which would include important population centres and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities, as well as vital communication lines. These four sectors would be the Freetown peninsula (three battalions plus support elements), the Lungi/Port

Loko area (three battalions), the Makeni/Magburaka/Koidu area (three battalions) and the Bo/Kenema/Kailahun area (three battalions). In particular, each battalion would be assigned to the protection of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites and weapon storage sites and the security of communication lines in its area of operations.

32. The total number of troops of an expanded UNAMSIL would be subject to periodic review in the light of conditions on the ground and the progress made in the peace process, in particular in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, as well as in the restructuring of the Sierra Leonean armed forces. As the overall security situation in the country improves, I would be prepared to recommend to the Security Council a reduction in the force level.

33. As indicated in my letter of 23 December, the new tasks falling to UNAMSIL would require robust rules of engagement for the entire United Nations force. The rules of engagement elaborated on the basis of the Mission's current mandate are deemed to be sufficiently strong in the present circumstances. However, UNAMSIL will keep the rules of engagement under constant review and propose any adjustments that may be required.

34. The induction of the required troops would have to keep pace with the withdrawal of ECOMOG, which would require close coordination with its command. The deployment of any additional UNAMSIL battalions would require transportation by air.

Mine action

35. Since mine warfare has been a feature of the conflict in certain areas of Sierra Leone, a mine action capacity will be required as part of UNAMSIL. In addition to mine clearance and unexploded ordnance disposal platoons, which will be deployed in the battalions to meet their operational needs, a mine action office will have to be established within UNAMSIL. The office would also act as coordinator for mine action activities, including those to be implemented by non-governmental organizations and humanitarian agencies operating in the country. In this connection, it would particularly focus on awareness training for UNAMSIL personnel in the area of mines/unexploded ordnance. Finally, once the situation has been assessed, the mine action office would contribute to the development of a strategy to meet any short-, medium- and long-term requirements for action with respect to mines/unexploded ordnance in Sierra Leone.

Civilian police

36. Up to 60 United Nations civilian police advisers, who would advise and assist, in close cooperation with other international efforts, the Government of Sierra Leone and local police officials on the restructuring and training of the Sierra Leonean police forces, would be required. They would also be deployed at the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites and population centres to provide advice on the maintenance of law and order. This increase from the previous civilian police strength of six United Nations police advisers has become necessary since the Sierra Leonean law enforcement authorities will be required to step up their presence and activities in the countryside and at

disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites to make up for the important role ECOMOG played in the maintenance of law and order.

37. As indicated above, the maintenance of law and order in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camps is an area of particular concern. It is felt that this problem can best be addressed through a preventive approach, including an enhanced information policy, political engagement between the rebel leaders and the Government, efforts to shorten the period of encampment as much as possible and the general rehabilitation of the country. However, law and order problems have already occurred and should be expected when large numbers of ex-combatants are cantoned. If not addressed properly, such problems could have a detrimental effect on the peace process. Therefore, UNAMSIL should be prepared, if needed, to assist the Government in its efforts to maintain law and order at the sites. In this regard, the Government must deploy a credible law enforcement presence at the sites as soon as possible. Bearing in mind the present lack of adequately trained police personnel and equipment, I strongly encourage donors to provide the necessary assistance to the Government.

Civilian component

38. The concept of operations and the composition of the Mission's substantive civilian components would remain essentially as described in my report to the Security Council dated 30 July 1999 (S/1999/836). However, it would be my intention to establish additional United Nations civil affairs offices, comprising three civil affairs staff, at each of the four sector headquarters with a view to assisting the Government as it extends its authority to the countryside.

39. In order to support the effective functioning of an expanded UNAMSIL, it would be critical that additional administrative and logistical support be made available. To this end, an adequate increase in administrative and technical personnel as well as resources will be required. The cost estimates for the proposed expansion of UNAMSIL will be submitted to the Security Council shortly in an addendum to the present report.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

40. During the reporting period, the situation in Sierra Leone has remained difficult, and progress in the implementation of the Lomé Agreement has been very slow. However, the tension prevailing in some areas subsided somewhat following the recent deployment of UNAMSIL to the countryside.

41. It is obvious that, despite the progress made, the peace established in Sierra Leone is still very fragile. Tension and mistrust among the parties to the conflict continue, while the disarmament process has achieved only modest progress. In addition, unruly members of some armed groups continue to attack, rob and rape civilians in parts of the country, while humanitarian workers are denied access to large parts of the population.

42. There can be no justification for non-compliance or delays in the implementation of the Lomé Agreement, for the continuing human rights abuses or

for not allowing humanitarian aid to reach those in need. I therefore call upon all political parties and their leaders to urge their followers to act responsibly so that the people of Sierra Leone can start to live a normal life.

43. In my letter of 23 December, I informed the Security Council that, following Nigeria's decision to withdraw its troops from Sierra Leone, ECOMOG would be unable to continue to perform the vital functions of providing security, in particular in Freetown and at the international airport at Lungi, and protecting the Government of Sierra Leone.

44. In order to enable UNAMSIL to assume many of the functions that are now assigned to ECOMOG, I recommended that the Security Council authorize, as soon as possible, the expansion of UNAMSIL and a broadening of its mandate as described in paragraphs 23 to 38 of the present report. The rapid expansion of UNAMSIL will be indispensable in maintaining the necessary security conditions for the implementation of the Lomé Agreement, in particular the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, the extension of State administration throughout the provinces and, in due course, the holding of elections in Sierra Leone.

45. Clearly, after more than eight years of brutal conflict, building trust and confidence will take time and will require a concerted effort by all parties in Sierra Leone parties as well as the international community. However, the responsibility for the success of the peace process ultimately lies with the people and leaders of Sierra Leone. It is crucial, therefore, that the Government of Sierra Leone take the lead in developing a comprehensive plan for the restructuring of the police and armed forces so that they will be able to safeguard fully the stability and security of the country once UNAMSIL begins its withdrawal following the elections next year.

46. I should like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Mr. Adeniji, and to the Force Commander, Major General Jetley, and to all the military and civilian personnel of UNAMSIL for their unwavering commitment and dedicated efforts in support of the peace process under difficult circumstances.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 10 January 2000

Country	Military observers	Staff officers	Troops	Total
Bangladesh	12			12
Bolivia	4			4
Canada	5			5
China	6			6
Croatia	10			10
Czech Republic	5			5
Denmark	2			2
Egypt	10			10
France	3			3
Gambia	4			4
Ghana	1	3	776	780
India	14	15	1 413	1 442
Indonesia	10			10
Jordan	5			5
Kenya	11	11	821	843
Kyrgyzstan	2			2
Malaysia	10			10
Nepal	6			6
New Zealand	2			2
Nigeria	4	8	1 552	1 564
Norway	5			5
Pakistan	10			10
Russian Federation	14			14
Slovakia	2			2
Sweden	3			3
Thailand	5			5
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	22			22
United Republic of Tanzania	12			12
Uruguay	11			11
Zambia	10			10
Total	220	37	4 562	4 819[a]

[a] Plus four civilian police observers from Namibia (Chief), Ghana, Kenya and Norway.